

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PHNOM 08775 221054Z

13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 RSR-01 /085 W

----- 019642

R 220552Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2688

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 8775

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PINT, CB

SUBJ: LETTER FROM SIR ROBERT THOMPSON TO LON NOL

REF: PHNOM PENH 8703

1. TRANSMITTED IN THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS IS THE TEXT OF AN AUGUST 20 LETTER FROM SIR ROBERT THOMPSON TO PRESIDENT LON NOL, WHICH PROVIDES AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ENEMY'S CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS IN CAMBODIA AND OF THE OPPORTUNITIES NOW OPEN TO FANK AND THE GKR.

2. BEGIN TEXT. MY DEAR MARSHAL, IT WAS A VERY GREAT PLEASURE FOR ME TO MEET YOU AGAIN ON SUNDAY 12 AUGUST AND TO HEAR YOUR VIEWS ON THE SITUATION. AS YOU MAY HEARD, I WAS ALSO ALSO ABLE TO PAY ANOTHER SHORT VISIT DURING THIS LAST WEEKEND, SINCE THE BOMBING HALT, SO THAT I AM FULLY UP TO DATE WITH THE SITUATION BEFORE RETURNING TO WASHINGTON THIS WEEK AND REPORTING TO PRESIDENT NIXON.

3. IN SPITE OF THE HEAVY DEFEAT WHICH YOU INFLICTED ON THE ENEMY DURING HIS RECENT OFFENSIVE, I AM QUITE SURE THAT IT IS STILL HIS INTENTION TO RENEW THE OFFENSIVE ON
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 08775 221054Z

PHNOM PENH. HOWEVER IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT HE

HAS THE CAPABILITY OF REGAINING THE MOMENTUM WHICH WOULD BE NECESSARY TO DO THIS. EITHER VERY LITTLE WILL HAPPEN BETWEEN NOW AND THE DRY SEASON OR, IF AN OFFENSIVE IS RENEWED, I AM SURE THAT YOU AND THE FORCES OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC WILL AGAIN REPEL IT, PROVIDED THAT YOU PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE AREA ALONG ROUTE 4 AND SOUTH OF IT AND, SECONDLY, TO THE AREA BETWEEN THE BASSAC AND ROUTE 1. I WAS ABLE TO DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM WITH MAJOR GENERAL SOSTHENE FERNANDEZ INCLUDING THE IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING THAT THE COMMAND CHANNELS AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF YOUR FORCE ARE CLEARLY DEFINED. IN FACT, OF THE TWO ALTERNATIVES OPEN TO THE ENEMY, I WOULD ALSO PREFER THAT HE SHOULD MAKE AN EARLY ATTEMPT TO RENEW THE OFFENSIVE AND BE DEFEATED. THIS WOULD GREATLY RAISE THE MORALE OF ALL YOUR FORCES AND AT THE SAME TIME DESTROY THE MORALE OF THE ENEMY.

4. WHETHER THE ENEMY ATTACKS OR NOT, THERE WILL BE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY IN THE NEAR FUTURE AT THE RIGHT PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT TO EXPLOIT HIS FAILURE. IN THIS RESPECT THERE ARE TWO VERY IMPORTANT POINTS. FIRST, YOU AND THE MEMBERS OF YOUR GOVERNMENT MUST DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO RALLY THE KHMER PEOPLE BEHIND THEIR ARMY AND TO GIVE IT FULL SUPPORT WITH ADDITIONAL RECRUITS. SECONDLY, IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO PREPARE A STRONG NATIONALIST AND PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNTER OFFENSIVE TO SPLIT THE KHMER INSURGENTS FROM THE NORTH VIETNAMESE. FOR THIS PURPOSE IT WILL BE MOST IMPROTANT THAT YOU SHOULD RECRUIT AND ENCOURAGE ALL PATRIOTIC KHMER PERSONALITIES, IN ADDITION TO THOSE IN YOUR GOVERNMENT, WHO HAVE INFLUENCE AND RESPECT IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE COUNTRY, TO CONDUCT A NATIONAL CAMAPIGN TO EVICT THE FOREIGN INVADER, AND ANY COMMUNISTS WHO SUPPORT HIM, AND TO RALLY THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THE KHMER PEOPLE TO YOUR SIDE.

5. THE MESSAGE OF THIS PSYCHOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN MUST BE VERY SIMPLE: THAT KHMER SHOULD NOT FIGHT KHMER; THAT THEY HAVE ONLY DONE SO BECAUSE OF THE FOREIGN INVADER; THAT, IF THE FOREIGN INVADER LEAVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 08775 221054Z

THE PARIS CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT, THERE WILL BE NO PROBLEM IN REACHING A SETTLEMENT; AND THAT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO PRESERVE AN INDEPENDENT KHMER NATION.

6. IN VIEW OF THE FIGHTING WHICH HAS ALREADY OCCURRED IN SOME AREAS BETWEEN THE KHMER INSURGENTS AND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE, WHICH MAY INCREASE IF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE COMPEL THEM TO CONDUCT ANOTHER FUTILE OFFENSIVE,

I AM SURE THAT A MESSAGE OF THIS NATURE WILL HELP TO RALLY LARGE NUMBERS OF THE INSURGENT RANK AND FILE WHO ARE BASICALLY PARTIOTS AND NOT COMMUNISTS TO YOUR SIDE. THIS IN TURN WILL ENCOURAGE ALL THE PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED AREAS TO SUPPORT THE ARMY IN REGAINING CONTROL OVER LOST AREAS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE. I HAVE FOUND IN MY EXPERIENCE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES TO GIVE HIGHER RANKING RALLIERS THE OPPORTUNITY BOTH OF TALKING TO THE PEOPLE IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN WHY THEY HAVE DESERTED THE COMMUNIST CAUSE AND OF HELPING THE GOVERNMENT IN POSITIONS OF TRUST AND RESPONSIBILITY TO DEFEAT THEIR FORMER MASTERS. SUCH CONFIDENCE IN THEM IS THE ESSENCE OF RECONCILIATION.

7. I AM PASSING THROUGH SINGAPORE ON MY WAY BACK TO THE UNITED STATE AND WILL SEE PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW. I WILL RAISE THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING YOU DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT AT THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS NEXT MONTH AND WILL ALSO WRITE TO TUN RAZAK OF MALAYSIA AND PRESIDENT SUHARTO OF INDONESIA ON THE SAME SUBUECT. AS YOU YOURSELF MENTIONED TO ME DURING OUR TALK IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE COUNTRIES OF SOUTH EAST ASIA COMBINE TOGETHER AGAINST THE COMMON ENEMY.

8. I TRUST THAT YOU WILL NOT MIND MY WRITING TO YOU AT SOME LENGTH ON THESE SUBJECT. YOU KNOW THAT I ONLY DO SO BECAUSE I HAVE THE WHOLE FUTURE WELFARE OF YOUR PEOPLE AT HEART.

9. I EXPECT TO PAY ANOTHER VISIT EARLY NEXT YEAR AND GREATLY LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOUR EXCELLENCY AGAIN IN A MUCH IMPROVED SITUATION. WITH WARM REGARDS, YOURS SINCERELY, SIR ROBERT THOMPSON. END TEXT.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PHNOM 08775 221054Z

SWANK

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PHNOM08775
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SWANK
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PHNOM PENH
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730822/aaaaaqef.tel
Line Count: 155
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: PHNOM PENH 8703
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20-Nov-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <26-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LETTER FROM SIR ROBERT THOMPSON TO LON NOL
TAGS: MOPS, PINT, CB, (LON NOL), (THOMPSON, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005